



Ordnance Electronic Newsletter

Fellow Warriors! This is the 3rd edition of the electronic newsletter. What is unique about this edition is that we have been fortunate to have Colonel Brown spell out her career path into the Acquisition Corps. The Ordnance Corps has a historical link with the Acquisition Corps and is a great opportunity for those who wish to get involved in research and development, testing, contracting and program management. Under our current officer management policy we choose our functional area between 5 and 6 years of service.

A functional area is a grouping of officers by technical specialty or skill, which usually requires significant education, training and experience. Individual preference, academic background, manner of performance, training and experience, and needs of the Army are all considered during the designation process. For more information about the functional area process please go to <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/opfamdd/fad.htm>. In order to find more about the Acquisition Corps go to <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/OPfam51/ambmain.htm>. After the functional area process officers are actually accessed into the Acquisition Corps between their 8th and 10th year of service by a special Acquisition Accessions Board. Here is a good listing of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/OPfam51/FAQs.pdf> reference the accessions process. The advantage of choosing FA 51 prior to the accessions board is that you may be utilized in acquisitions assignments prior to actually being accessed into the Acquisition Corps.

Additionally, we have several articles from Lieutenants deployed supporting OIF and a detailed article from CPT Nikkila documenting his EOD company's support to 3ID in their attack north thru Iraq. We appreciate these officers taking the time to write and share their experiences with everyone.

ARTICLES:

- *Opportunities in the Acquisition Corps – COL Brown*
- *Serving Proudly in Iraq – LT Mackall*
- *An Ordnance Officers Return to Iraq – LT Camacho*
- *The Heavy Division EOD Fight – CPT Nikkila*
- *632d Maintenance Company – LT Barnes*

"Our enemy on freedom's frontier is adapting to our tactics everyday, so must we adapt and change our tactics to defeat this threat."

-- SMA Kenneth O. Preston

Go Ordnance!

Opportunities in the Acquisition Corps



I've been an Ordnance Officer since 1977. The Army we serve in today is nothing like the Army I joined. It is much different and more challenging, since we are transforming today at a fast pace. Likewise, my career has been nothing like I had planned. I expected to pursue the traditional Ordnance career path, but I took a different route. It has been an exciting 26 years.

During my early career, I was assigned to some great locations and interesting positions. They were Berlin Brigade, Berlin, Germany; 7th Infantry Division, Fort Ord, CA; AMC HQ in Alexandria, VA and 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, Korea. Except for AMC HQ, all the time was spent working with soldiers. The unit leadership and teamwork experience were invaluable. My assignment in AMC HQ Secretary of the General Staff Office was also an eye opener – as a Captain I sometimes traveled with the four star CG, AMC, and listened to high-level issues at some of his meetings.

At mid-career, I decided to join the Acquisition Corps after a lot of careful thought. At the time, I thought I wanted to work in procurement for the remainder of my career but things never turn out as expected – in my case it turned out to be for the best. My first assignment was in classified contracting for Special Operations Forces. I then took over as Chief of the Contracting Office for the National Defense University (NDU). Both assignments were great jobs for a beginning acquisition officer to continue learning more about the contracting process and it was a great opportunity to work with Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps personnel at NDU.

After getting some contracting experience, it was time to work in the Pentagon. Although it is a tough environment to work in, I found that it was a great education in how the Army runs. Every officer should experience an assignment there since it is in effect, "Corporate HQ" for DoD. I started out in the Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison (OCLL) answering the written and verbal procurement issues raised by members of Congress and their constituents. I had the chance to brief staffers, attend hearings and also accompany Army Acquisition leadership to the Hill. My next assignment was Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. I worked on a wide variety of issues, thereby broadening my perspective on how DoD operated.

Next I was selected for LTC command but to my surprise it was test & evaluation, not contracting command. I did not know anything about testing equipment but I figured I would learn by listening to the people that I would work with. Off I went to Cold Regions Test Center, Ft Greely, Alaska, for two very exciting years. We conducted environmental testing of everything from vehicles to clothing. The people I worked with were

enthusiastic about their jobs, no matter how cold it got! (Minus 66 degrees ambient was my personal record). Alaska is truly the last frontier with spectacular scenery everywhere in the state.



I spent a wonderful year at the Army War College studying strategy, running into some old friends, as well as meeting many new ones. I was then assigned as the Deputy Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (now Chemical Materials Agency). The program is the largest in the Army, spending \$1.6 B per year to dispose of the Army's Cold War chemical weapons.

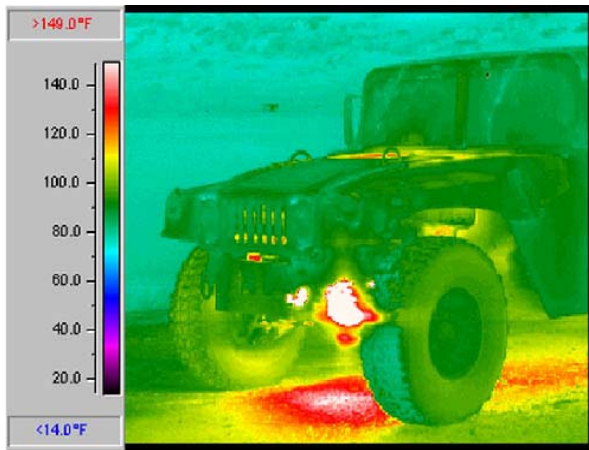
But, I missed my real passion - I wanted to return to testing. My dream came true - I was selected for COL command and as the Aberdeen Test Center Commander. I've served in the position for over two years. We have over 1500 civilians, contractor employees and military who are just the best! People have a real sense of mission, especially about OIF, OEF, and force protection items such as individual body armor and other key items. Many have worked 6+ days for the past 18 months on the Stryker program. Others have been working extended hours on important programs such as HMMWV and FMTV armor kits. I'm so proud that an ATC employee designed Slat armor! As an Ordnance Officer I feel I have the best of both worlds – I work with a group of great testers who are supported by first class welders, machinists and automotive shop personnel.

My advice to all Ordnance Officers at every level is to not be afraid to take on the hard jobs and unexpected missions. You should always strive to stretch and learn. You never know when the unexpected challenge will turn out to be life changing or career launching. The best assignments come from unexpected directions, so enjoy the journey.

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please check my command's website and click on the "facilities/capabilities" tab to see what we do

<http://www.atc.army.mil/>







Serving Proudly in Iraq

My name is 1LT Toby Mackall and I'm currently serving with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division in Iraq. I am the Maintenance Control Officer (Shop Officer) for the 64th Forward Support Battalion based at Fort Carson, Colorado. My duties and responsibilities include the direct supervision, control, and coordination of 11 Direct Support Maintenance shops including 5 Maintenance Support Teams (MST) collocated with their respective maneuver battalions. I graduated from OBC in April 2002 with orders to Fort Carson. Although I knew I had orders to a Brigade Combat Team, I had no idea what type of unit this was, and more importantly, what role I would play as an Ordnance officer. As suggested by the instructors at Aberdeen, I contacted my unit in order to introduce myself and acquire some information about what I could expect upon arrival. This worked out well, as I learned that I was slotted for an immediate platoon leader position. And that's just what happened, I served as the Ground Support Equipment Platoon Leader (GSE) for my first 12 months. The GSE platoon consists of an Electronic Maintenance shop, a Missile shop, and an Engineer base shop consisting of generator and A/C mechanics as well as other quartermaster equipment repairers. I also served as my company's Unit Movement Officer. I was charged with the loading, accountability, and movement of over 100 vehicle assets to the National Training Center and to Operation Iraqi Freedom. I suggest all new officers become your unit's UMO. It's an excellent way to learn what equipment your unit has to work with and it's a great way to be involved in a large-scale military operation. During my platoon leader time, the GSE platoon participated in a Live Fire Exercise, Mountain Strike '02, and NTC Rotation 03-01. The highlight of my platoon leader time was the preparation and deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. My unit deployed April 08, 2003 and currently is serving in Balad, Iraq.



In June, I became the Shop Officer, and have been charged with running the 30 level maintenance of a stand-alone brigade in a heavy division. The 157 soldiers that make up the Direct Support Maintenance of the 64th FSB do an outstanding job repairing and returning combat vehicles and equipment to the fight. They work long hours and are committed to providing the best maintenance of customer equipment that you'll find in the Army. The 64th FSB has re-located (jumped) over 5 times since we've been in country. We have definitely taken the tour of Iraq, jumping as far as Kirkuk then moving south to Balad. As the Shop Officer some of the challenges that I've been faced with is the lack or delayed shipment of essential 30 level Class IX repair parts. The mechanics we have do an outstanding job repairing equipment as soon as the parts are available. The challenge is repairing when you have long estimated ship dates on parts. We countered this with authorized controlled exchanges of parts and rebuilding assemblies to make a serviceable assembly. During the last 8 months in a combat theatre, we were forced to make missions happen and not rely on a lack of parts as an excuse for inoperative equipment. Our aggressiveness and devotion to mission accomplishment allowed the 64th FSB to maintain a maintenance reputation of fixing forward in a timely manner. I'm sure there will be plenty of writers who will capitalize on the sweat and sometimes tears of those who served in Iraq, but I can surely say that the lessons learned during this extended deployment will change all those who served here and elsewhere.

1LT Mackall out.

An Ordnance Officer's return to Iraq

I had the opportunity to deploy with two separate units to Iraq. I convoyed north to Iraq from Kuwait on mid May with the 125 FSB, 3 BCT, 1AD Ft. Riley KS as a Shop Officer. It was a great experience to set up operations in a combat environment. Some of our biggest challenges were the acquisition of the CL IX parts needed to keep our Brigade Combat Team (BCT) operational, and the heat. I do not exaggerate when I say that our first nights in Baghdad were spend trying to sleep and looking at tracers and enemy flares in the night sky over us. Nothing can take away the pride I felt seen my soldiers living and working under enemy fire, as my mechanics stopped working just long enough to take shelter during a mortar attack and then go back to work. Through the fear and nervousness they worked on. There is no Army in the world that can do what we can do.



I PCS'd from Ft Riley KS to Bamberg GE, and was assigned as Support Operations (SPO) Maintenance OIC for the 71st CSB, 7 CSG. I left Iraq on 12 July 03 from 1AD and returned on the 16th of September 03 with 71st CSB. My new Battalion commander LTC James L. McGinnis was eagerly awaiting my arrival so that I could begin working with his two Shop Officers. The SPO did without a MATO for a couple of months before my arrival so you could say I had my work cut out for me. My duties include: The management of the battalion's external maintenance and recovery missions, and proponent for the battalion mission maintenance SOP. Prepare plans and policies, make recommendations, determine requirements, prepare and keep records and reports, and exercise supervision over all aspects of maintenance and recovery within the battalion's DS support mission. Coordinate with the Corps Material Management Center (CMMC) and adjacent maintenance battalions for backup support, lateral supply, cross-leveling workloads and exchanges of maintenance information. Recommend assignment of support missions, including the Maintenance Support Teams (MSTs) of the assigned maintenance companies. Ensures that priorities for maintenance are correctly followed and recommend proposed new locations of maintenance elements to the battalion S-2/3. I am now about 65km north from my previous location, at Balad Air Field (LSA Anaconda).

It was a big challenge to transition from Shop Officer to MATO, but like all things we grow into it. I found the soldiers here as committed to service to as the one's I just left. Living conditions continue to improve and I must say they are pretty good. Our soldiers put a talent show together for Christmas Eve. A great time had by all. For new years day, our command team arrange for the AMC band to play for us. It hasn't all been a good time, but thru all the hardships we continue to do our duty. I was an Armor Officer and volunteered for a branch transfer to Ordnance. Being a logistician is a much bigger challenge than patrolling in a tank, not as sexy perhaps, but no less important. The scope of influence is that much greater as is our responsibility to the Army. Our maintainers have performed above expectations and as an Ordnance Officer I would not want to be anywhere else.

LT Camacho

Improvised Rocket Launchers

I am currently assigned to TF 1-67, 4th ID in Ba'Qubah Iraq. Last week the enemy attacked FOB Warhorse with two 120mm mortar rounds killing two engineers. The attackers got away with the tube before we could return fire. They also used three home made 57mm rocket launchers during the attack which weren't effective but shows a high degree of ingenuity and desire to use any munitions available. As a matter of fact, earlier in the year we seized munitions of all sorts which were literally laying out in the open fields. Imagine a 5 ton truck filled with 83mm mortars. I attached photos of the launchers, one with the control box still connected.

Have a good week sir.

1LT Nix





The Heavy Division EOD Fight

An article about supporting 3ID's maneuver to Baghdad

5 EOD TEAMS WERE INTEGRATED WITH MANEUVER TASK FORCES from the 3d Infantry Division (M) south of the Iraq boarder one day before they crossed into what would be the longest and fastest advance in the history of modern warfare. All of the teams were aligned with tank and mechanized infantry battalions, as well as the Division's Cavalry Squadron with specific tasks and purposes, the ultimate objective: support the maneuver commander's fight, ensure he has freedom of mobility, and ensure the Division has EOD support at the right place and the right time.

The 759th Ordnance Company (EOD), stationed at Ft. Irwin, CA had never deployed before, yet traditionally it maintains one of the highest operational tempos of any of the 52d Ordnance Group's 37 EOD companies. Each year, the company responds to over 400 explosive hazard incidents and destroys on average over 65,000 pieces of ordnance annually. Supporting the 10 maneuver rotations per year at the National Training Center (NTC) generates most of the workload, however the company maintains an excellent relationship with local police, fire and local civil and federal governmental organizations.

In September 2002 the company was alerted for deployment to Kuwait ISO Operation Enduring Freedom. The company received its official alert in early October with the expectation they would be gone in about a week. After two months of waiting, they finally deployed December 10th 2002. After arriving in Kuwait, the company was placed in a Direct Support (DS) role to the 3d Infantry Division (M). The company began its integration with the division shortly thereafter.

Integration with the maneuver division was somewhat like being a participant in a shotgun wedding; you had to trust one another because you were stuck together whether you liked it or not. The company was anxious to be involved. Our EOD doctrine from FM 9-15 had never been validated. Companies, including the 759th had participated in NTC rotations supporting one maneuver BCT, but never a division in an armed conflict. I think the lesson we have all learned, there can never be enough EOD.

The initial involvement began when the company provided a command briefing to the 3d ID (M) G3 Operations Officer, LTC Bair. The brief included EOD personnel structure, equipment overview, EOD operations and provided a list of different types of training EOD could provide to the Division. Also discussed was a directive that every 3d ID soldier would receive UXO awareness training, to begin immediately. At that time the company was to read into "The Plan".

Initial plans for the invasion of Iraq were complex, fast moving, and contained many geographically separated fights. We sat through our first 3d ID wargame session that covered the initial plan. City names such as Tallil, An Nasiriyah, As Samawah, Karbala, An Najaf took on new names such as FIREBIRD (Tallil Air Base), LIBERTY (An Nasiriyah), CLAY (bridges in An Nasiriyah), JENKINS (As Samawah), CHATHAM (bridges in As Samawah) and RAMS (vicinity of An Najaf) respectively. Each objective had its own specific tasks and purposes that needed to be completed prior to the next phase beginning, and all had to be accomplished prior to moving to the final objective; Baghdad. It was during the initial wargame session that EOD support was requested for clearance of a demolition-rigged bridge and for clearing an airfield of UXOs.

Pre-Game Plan From January to March, the 759th lived with the 3d ID (M) planning at all levels within the Division. The operational plan kept being refined, changed and became more complex. Our challenge was to learn the plan, integrate with a division that had not worked with EOD, and determine where best to place a critical theater asset that was already in short supply prior to ever crossing the berm.

As the OPLAN developed, more requests for EOD support were made. The plan was broken down into phases. This article will cover what was supposed to happen, and what actually happened.

The Plan: Phase I, At the start of the war, the company had three specific missions: 1) Clear Tallil Air Base (OBJ FIREBIRD) runways of UXOs so the coalition could begin improvements in preparation to land aircraft, clear the Route One Bridge (OBJ CLAY) to ensure safe passage for 1MAR DIV. This was an absolutely critical task given the Iraqi Army had a standing order to blow the bridge if coalition closed within three

kilometers of the bridge. Both of those objectives were in the vicinity of An Nasaryah. The last objective for EOD was to clear the Al Quidisya canal bridges (OBJ JENKINS) vicinity of As Samawa. To do this, the company aligned with the maneuver organizations responsible for clearing those objectives. The clearance of OBJ CLAY was the responsibility of TF 2-69, 3d BCT, 3ID. The clearance of OBJ FIREBIRD was the responsibility of TF 1-30, 3d BCT, 3ID and the responsibility of clearing OBJ CHATHAM was the 3-7 Cavalry's mission, the Division Cavalry Squadron.

Phase II was planned to begin upon completion the seizures of OBJ FIREBIRD, OBJ CLAY and the Canal Bridges. The next objectives were 200 Km away, vicinity south of Karbala, there the Division would establish a large logistics area (Objective RAMS / LSA Bushmaster) and set up for what was supposed to be a two day tactical pause. During that time the company was tasked to clear a UAV runway and provide one team per each maneuver brigade in preparation for the attack to Baghdad. During the movement to Baghdad, intelligence anticipated there to be a large number of bridges rigged for demolition and we expected to find more ammunition caches left by the Iraqi Army. The threat of chemical weapons caches pondered each of us as we continued to train while in Kuwait.

Phase III would be the attack up to Baghdad and the seizure of the HWY 1 and HWY 8 interchange (OBJ SAINTS), the major north/south east/west thoroughfare and the seizure of Saddam International Airport, now renamed as Baghdad International Airport (OBJ LIONS). Phase IV would be SASO operations in Baghdad.

What happened: As with all plans, they are subject to change. This plan was no different. The company had been living with the 3d BCT, 3d ID for two months. During that time, we had planned our missions concurrently with the other BCTs we would be supporting and with the Division Engineer Bde.

On March 19th, the President gave the Iraqi Regime a 48-hour ultimatum; we assumed we would be moving to our attack positions in Kuwait the following day. We assumed wrong. That evening, virtual havoc broke out in the Bde TOC when we were informed that the movement to the attack positions was moved up to less than two hours from the time we were informed. We quickly broke down our operations and joined the march formations of the units we would be supporting.

The initial set: One EOD team was with 2-69 Armor, one team was with 3-7 CAV, and the rest of the company was with the headquarters located with 1-30 IN. Movement to the Tactical Assembly Area (TAA) was only 35 kilometers away, however we SP'd at 2100 the night of the 19th and did not arrive until 0400 the morning of the 20th. All of the Division's 7000 vehicles snaked their way up a two lane road at a mind numbing 5k per hour, sometimes halting at highly congested areas for up to thirty minutes at a time. When we arrived at our attack position on the border, we caught a few hours of sleep. On March 20th, at 1800 we donned our JS-List and began watching and hearing the attack. When we saw the first MLRS fire at dusk, we knew the ground war had begun.

At 0400 our serial began movement from the attack position to the breach in the 10KM wide DMZ that contained three massive berms, an electrified fence and multiple concertina fences. We crossed into Iraq at dawn and began our cross-country road march to our first stop – Assault Position Barrow in preparation on our first missions; clearance of the Tallil Air Base and of the OBJ CLAY.

21 March: Battle of OBJ FIREBIRD, Just after dark, 3 BCT attacked with 2-69 Armor leading to clear a series of planned artillery areas (PAAs) to support the attack on the airfield. Artillery then fired several missions on the OBJ FIREBIRD Airfield. Simultaneously the 4th BDE conducted deep attacks vicinity the HWY 1 Bridge to prevent reinforcement to the OBJ FIREBIRD area. 2-69 AR attacked along Rte 1 to the bridge, seized it encountering light resistance. 1-15 IN followed and occupied blocking positions north of OBJ FIREBIRD in order to isolate the objective. 1-30 IN then followed 1-15 IN, and entered and cleared the airfield, again encountering light resistance. 1-15 IN attacked toward an intermediate objective (LIBERTY) and engaged and destroyed 2 tanks, several BMPs, many support vehicles, and dismounted infantry of the 11th Division. The enemy in and around the airfield initially fought hard, but quickly surrendered at first opportunity. 1st BCT and many divisional and Corps units then passed 3rd BCT to continue movement to OBJ RAMS and ATK PSN RAIDERS, near An Najaf. 2-70 AR relieved 2-69 AR at the Highway 1 Bridge, and 1-10 (FA) and 2-69 AR joined 1 BCT as it passed 3 BCT. 1-30 IN was relieved at OBJ FIREBIRD by 1-41 IN, who then relieved 3-7 CAV at Samawah, to contain the enemy in the vicinity of the city.

It took us approximately 13 hours to reach Assault Position Barrow, south of OBJ FIREBIRD, from our initial SP. We were all tired, but adrenaline from the first day's events kept everyone alert. A Co (Assassin) 2-69 Armor with one EOD team was the lead Task Force. They were responsible for clearing the PAAs along route one southeast of Tallil and OBJ CLAY. On the way up from Assault position Barrow, EOD team 1-1 was traveling with the Assassin's Company combat trains behind the M1s. After a much more robust resistance than expected, the EOD team reached OBJ CLAY at 2300 and fortunately reported no explosives were found. About the same time the Company Headquarters moved approximately 4 kilometers from OBJ FIREBIRD to PAA White, co-located with the Bn Task Force trains while the three maneuver companies and one engineer company moved onto OBJ FIREBIRD. It took until 0400 the next morning, after non-stop battles just kilometers ahead of us to be called forward onto the air base. When we arrived on OBJ FIREBIRD, it was just about dawn. Upon arrival, we found approximately 300 obstacles that varied from simple piles of dirt, to old T-62 and T-72 hulks, most likely remnants of Gulf War I. Each was inspected and UXOs removed from the Airfield so the Engineers could begin clearing the piles of debris off of the runways. After about 40 hours of moving all day the day and night before, and working all day clearing UXOs, fatigue began to set in. The company had completed its Phase I mission and moved to Route One and linked up with the 3ID EN BDE to be escorted to our next phase.

22-24 March: Battle of As Samawah (3-7 CAV, 3 BCT) After moving along routes Hurricanes and Tornadoes, 3-7 CAV secured the bridge crossing sites in As Samawah. 3-7 CAV easily secured the bridges at CHATHAM, their initial objective, but met a fierce new threat to Division operations. In addition to regular troops, the Iraqi resistance began to employ fanatical paramilitary irregulars. This was our first indication of the resistance from the paramilitary forces. Paramilitary light forces, some in pickup trucks with machine guns, attacked the 3-7 CAV with small arms and RPGs. There were reports of enemy using armored vehicles w/ medical symbols used to transport combatants. 3-7 CAV arrived in the vicinity of OBJ CHATHAM, just west of As Samawah and were immediately engaged by mortars, small arms, and RPG fires. 3-7 CAV destroyed several S-60 AA guns and approx 100-200 dismounted irregulars.

Movement along HWY 1 As 1BCT (RAIDER BDE) moved along HWY 1 from As Nasiriyah to As Samawah to its final destination of OBJ RAIDERS, the Raider Brigade received numerous contacts with direct and indirect fire. A couple of contacts grew so intense that the convoys had to stop movement to deal with them. Eventually, in an effort to maintain the division's focus of moving to an area from where it could deal with the

Medina Division and secure Baghdad, traffic was diverted from HWY 1 to RTE Rovers to continue movement West unhindered by contact.

22-23 March: Battle for OBJ RAMS (4-64 AR) OBJ RAMS was selected as a potential rest site for the Division as well as future LSA for the Corps. Second Brigade, coming up Route Tornadoes, passed by 3-7 CAV and would be the lead elements of the Division to OBJ RAMS, a desolate spot west of the town of An Najaf. As they moved into the area, 1-64 AR came under the same energetic small arms and RPG attacks that the CAV had experienced in As Samawah. This was easily disposed of, but virtually every road junction, bridge, or depression had an RPG 'spider hole' that required extensive clearing throughout the AO. As they came close to An Najaf, they were met with more 'Technical Vehicles'—pickups with machine guns or RPGs. 2BCT killed 350 paramilitaries, 25 artillery tubes, 8 APCs, and 20 technical vehicles in clearing OBJ RAMS, and left 1-64 AR containing An Najaf from the southwest. They experienced near continuous suicide attacks from the town by light infantry.

Phase II for the 759th began with a reorganization of the company. Team 1-1 who was attached to 2-69 Armor, stayed with 2-69 after they were detached from 3BCT to 1BCT. Team 1-3 was detached from the company and stayed with 3d BCT to support their Lines of Communication (LOC) security mission, and the Company Headquarters detached from 3d BCT and rejoined the Division Main.

Phase two was a 200KM movement from OBJ FIREBIRD to OBJ RAMS, OBJ Spartan and OBJ Raiders. To get there we moved with the DIV EN BDE from An Nasaryah to As Samawa. At As Samawa we encountered our first large ordnance cache, approximately 6000 rounds of 57mm. We occupied 1-15's combat trains perimeter in As Samawa and walked into the abandoned military compound and found boxes stacked floor to ceiling in one building. That was the first of approximately two thousand caches we have had to clear, transport and either destroy or turn over to be re-issued to the new Iraqi Army.

The company arrived at OBJ RAMS and linked up with the Division Main, approximately 70 Km south of Karbala, EOD teams were located at OBJ SPARTANS and RAIDERS, 40 Km north of OBJ RAMS, and one team was located in As Samawa with the 3d BCT. We expected to be there for two days for a tactical pause, allowing the Division's logistics trains to catch up. Basic Loads were going to be replenished and soldiers were going to get a well deserved break....or so we thought.

3-7 Moves to Najaf After being relieved by 3BCT in As Samawah, 3-7 CAV moved along the HWY 9 paralleling the eastern side of the Euphrates en route to OBJ FLOYD, near An Najaf. During a blinding sandstorm, the CAV endure a fierce ambush of RPG teams, technicals, and a mix of PCs. The fighting was intense in almost zero visibility. 3-7 Cav had two tanks and one BFV rendered immobile as part of the contact.

Resistance from the Fedayeen in this area was fierce. Iraqi civilians were being forced to walk up to our perimeter to collect up the Fedayeen dead, killed during the occupation of OBJ RAMS, those civilians who refused to help the Fedayeen were being executed, those who left, but didn't return would come home to find that their families had been executed. We had also heard reports of civilians being executed by the Fedayeen in As Samawa if they did not show loyalty to the Regime. We began to encounter schools, hospitals and mosques that contained massive caches of ammunition that needed to be removed, proving Saddam's complete disregard for the laws of war.

On day two at OBJ RAMS, the 3-7 CAV requested our assistance to recover their two M1s in An Najaf. They were mobility kills that were left during the battle and 3-7 feared they were boobytrapped. At the same time, north of An Najaf, SSG Plummer, Team 1-1 received a call from TF 2-69 that a bridgehead had detonated with an armor company trapped on the far side (the unfriendly side) of the Euphrates River, just north of An Najaf. SSG Plummer was called because explosives were still in tact on the eastern half of the bridge. The EOD team arrived with their security element. A platoon of tanks and Bradleys were holding their position on the far side receiving light machine gun and small arms fire. The team leader arrived at the bridge and chose to have all non-essential personnel pulled back into a safe area. SSG Plummer reconnoitered the bridge and took apart the firing train, rendering safe the explosives left on the bridge. Immediately after the firing train was removed, indirect fire was walked onto and around the bridge, impacting where the vehicles were parked. SSG Plummer continued his mission, and exfiltrated in a M113 with the last of the security element along with the Bradleys and Tanks. In the interim, Team 1-4, SSG Wolover and SFC McClerren found the two M1s, completely looted and taken apart. They were left for scrap.

The company headquarters began receiving multiple requests for EOD support from divisional and non-divisional troops who were in the fight, but without EOD support. We were the closest EOD support available. Between the Company Commander, 1SG, OPS and Response NCOs, and one team, the headquarters began responding to the almost non-stop call for EOD from the 101st, 11th Attack Helicopter Regiment, and the V Corps Artillery. Something we had not expected. Our first call was to an ATACMS that fired, went up 300 meters and did a "flip". It came screaming back to earth and impacted near their battalion TOC, broke apart spilling submunitions everywhere. The rocket motor, still with plenty of propellant, continued to burn and headed toward the Battalion TOC, coming to rest only 100m away in a marsh. The result was a two-day cleanup and disposal of hundreds of submunitions.

During that period of the war, the aviation brigades were having a number of aircraft riddled with bullets and Rocket Propelled Grenades. The two Apache pilots captured were captured approximately 20 Km away from our position. These engagements left Hellfire missiles and 2.75-inch rockets unusable, and very unsafe. 27 of 30 Apaches we responded to had been damaged by small arms fire or had been struck by RPGs. The company dispatched teams to download the missiles and rockets, and using our explosive power tools, cleared three of the Apache's 30mm guns, which had high explosive rounds lodged in the gun barrels, rendering the gun inoperable. The teams worked quickly to clear the guns to make them fully mission capable, because after being cleared they were in the fight within hours of the teams completing work. The teams also responded to three Apache crashes, which during brown out conditions had crashed and rolled over once they landed. The Apaches were downloaded and the ordnance destroyed.

What was supposed to be a two-day tactical pause as Coalition forces "shaped" the route to Baghdad and Baghdad proper, turned into 7 days of limited attacks. The Medina Division, instead of dying in place, which is what the Coalition believed they would do, pulled from their fighting positions and impaled themselves on Coalition forces who attrite them to approximately 50 percent; the decision was made to resume offensive operations.

30-31 March: Resume Offensive Operations Beginning on 30 March the teams were moving again as the 3ID began offensive operations south of the Karbala Gap. The purpose of these operations was to ensure enemy artillery and maneuver forces that could range Karbala were significantly reduced, and to improve 3ID combat stance for operations into Baghdad. The operation began with the 3-7 CAV establishing a screen along the Division's western flank, while simultaneously attacking with 2BCT from West to East to

clear some restrictive terrain and rock quarries across the Division Front. This resulted in instant contact with the enemy and several enemy artillery, armor, and infantry units engaged and destroyed. The following day 2 BCT conducted a feint towards the west of Karbala at OBJ MURRAY in order to fix enemy forces from the Medina Division vicinity Al Hillah from repositioning towards Karbala. This maneuver drew the attention of the Iraqi Army. Believing this was our main attack; the enemy repositioned not only portions of the Medina, but also reinforced this area with battalions from the Hammarabi and Nebechadnezzar Divisions. At this point in the operation, the 3ID had taken 686 prisoners, destroyed over 200 tracked vehicles, 90 artillery pieces, dozens of rocket launchers, 200 technical vehicles, and approximately 4,000 enemy personnel.

01 April – Karbala Gap 2-69 AR, reorganized back to 3BCT (HAMMER BDE), took the lead and isolated Karbala from the east where they met a slew of paramilitary RPG teams, technical vehicles, and stray tanks. 1BCT then followed suit in the west as 2-7 IN initially contained forces from exiting the west side of Karbala while the remainder of the Raider Brigade thundered on to and through the Karbala Gap. Once through the gap, 1BCT pressed on to the north, approximately 80km southwest of Baghdad (Assault Position Wayne) and OBJ CHARGERS, 35km (southwest of Baghdad) in preparation to seize the critical crossing site over the Euphrates River that would allow 2BCT to complete the destruction of the Medina Division and initiate the stranglehold on the beleaguered capital city. The route was established north of the Karbala Gap, and the division existed on a MSR with one critical Armored Vehicle Land Bridge (AVLB) providing the means to move the Division.

02 April – OBJ Peach As the bulk of the Iraqi fighters were contained in Karbala by 3 BCT (-), the remainder of the Division was poised to cross the Euphrates vicinity OBJ PEACH. Alpha Company 11th Engineer Battalion conducted a daylight assault across the Euphrates River with RB-15s while taking direct and indirect fire from the far shore. Enroute, they noticed the bridge was wired for detonation. They called for their supporting EOD team to come forward. SSG Plummer came forward from the combat trains of TF 2-69 with his security element. The bridge had suffered a detonation on the westbound lane that limited the trafficability of the westbound lane. The bridge was rigged with several hundred pounds of explosives that again, had not detonated. The team arrived on site and began taking apart the firing train to ensure safe passage of the Marine Division's lead elements enroute to Baghdad. The top of the bridge had approximately 400 pounds of explosives with electric blasting caps wired in series. The pillars near bottom of the bridge were also packed with explosives and caps. Again, while working on de-rigging the bridge, the team received small arms and indirect fire. Quickly, the team finished their work, searched for secondary devices and moved out of the area while counter-battery fire was placed on the incoming indirect fire. The 3ID safely passed over the bridge and continued on their march toward Baghdad.

03 April – Attack to OBJ SAINTS With the bridgehead line firmly secured by 1BCT, 2BCT maneuvered toward OBJ SAINTS, the first Coalition objective seized on the outer cordon of Baghdad. 2BCT (SPARTAN BDE), was now a four battalion task force, as opposed to their normal three, and in an effort to reduce traffic congestion in the Karbala Gap, two battalions were sent around Karbala from the East and two were to travel through the gap. On the way to OBJ Saints, SSG Robsky, Team 1-2 team leader encountered numerous caches and large surface to air missiles. With limited time, the teams, with the assistance of their engineer counterparts, ran Mine Clearing Lane Charges (MICLIC) charges over the massive caches and detonated them, rendering them unusable so the enemy could not recover them. SSG Robsky found the first of numerous surface to air missiles (SAMs) never seen before such as the Al Fath, and also destroyed and rendered safe many SA-2s, SA-3s and destroyed thousands of RPGs and mines that were intended for use against coalition troops. The command and control of the Republican Guards was completely disrupted, as

most of the Medina Division destroyed was oriented south, they never knew where 3ID units were attacking next. 2BCT destroyed 65 T-72s, 40 BMPs, numerous Artillery pieces and over 500 dismounted infantrymen.

04-05 April –Seizure of BIAP (OBJ Lions) With 2BCT established at SAINTS, the order was given to expand on the Marne AO. As such, 3-7 CAV was quickly dispatched to perform a Guard to the west. Once again the CAV was pressed into fierce fighting as a number of T-72s and BMPs from the Hammarabi Division attempted to move west from Baghdad and SRG forces moved west, out of city. On the night of the 4th, Raider BDE moved north, breached the southern walls of BIAP under the cover of low illumination and smoke, eliminated all resistance in route and by the 5th all buildings were cleared and OBJ LIONS was secure. This was quite an achievement since the whole of the airport was ringed with military barracks, tanks, dismounted infantrymen, mortars, and paramilitary loyalist to the Hussein regime. 1BCT had secured the key terrain and foothold, which would enable all Coalition forces to flow into BAGDAD.

Although the 1BCT cleared the airport of Special Republican Guard (SRG) and Regular Army Forces, it was not clear of UXOs. Both the US and Iraqis fired submunitions onto the airfield, and there were also numerous T-72s, Anti-Aircraft Guns, missile launchers, and thousands of rounds of ordnance located in hundreds of caches on the airport and the areas surrounding the airport. SSG Plummer arrived at the airport during the initial attack; he was joined by the company headquarters on April 6th. Upon arrival, the company occupied an empty office building with the 3ID En Bde and began prioritizing missions to make OBJ Lions safe.

At OBJ Saints, Team 1-2 responded to the Spartan TOC, the TOC where they lived and provided direct support to. The TOC that had been hit by a large surface-to-surface missile. It was a direct hit, killing four and wounding 17. They were approximately 150 meters away and had just departed the TOC minutes earlier.

The airport had its own problems, there was a loaded and cocked T-72 sitting in the center of the runway pointed at the 1BCT TOC that needed to be downloaded, there were over 400 submunitions on the runway, multiple MANPAD and RPG caches, and numerous technical trucks that were destroyed as 1BCT moved onto the airport, all still containing ordnance. The airport also had multiple enemy KIAs in fighting positions and busses that had to be cleared prior to them being moved and properly buried. A less than glamorous task.

8 APR 03 – 3ID inside Baghdad After the 3IDs "Thunder Run" from HWY 8 to HWY 1, the 3ID began numerous attacks into Baghdad. With each attack and real estate gained came numerous caches being discovered. Within our first week into Baghdad, over 400 caches had been discovered, each containing thousands of rounds. On the 10th of April CPT Nikkila briefed the Corps Commander on the number of caches discovered. He asked the question "what can we do to help", the answer was trucks...lots and lots of trucks. With that, TF Bullet, supported by the V Corps Artillery was born.

Mid April to Present The conditions in Baghdad and the airport change daily for the better. Everyday, the 759th is in somebody's backyard or on top of his or her roof rendering safe, disposing of, or transporting deadly explosive items. They do this under threat of ambush and the newest threat, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) that are placed next to the roads they travel on every day. To date over 3.4 million rounds in more than 2000 locations throughout Iraq have been removed by the 759th Ordnance Company (EOD)'s 19 personnel. The net result has saved hundreds of lives, both Coalition and Iraqi civilian.

632nd Maintenance Company

I deployed with the 632nd Maintenance Company to Kuwait and Iraq from March – July 2004. We were there under the 24th Corps Support Group in support of 3 Infantry Division (Mech). The mission of the 632nd Maintenance Company was to coordinate, manage, conduct maintenance assessments and provide area Direct Support (DS) Maintenance operations for non-divisional units and backup support to the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized); requisition Class IX for all locations and manage the stockage warehouse. Most of the deployment was spent at FLB Dogwood just south of Baghdad.

Below are some highlights completed by the 632nd Maintenance Company during their deployment:



- The 632nd Maintenance Company was notified in December 2002 of a possible deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The company began preparing vehicles and personnel for the deployment to Kuwait. In late February 2003, the first elements of the 632nd deployed to Kuwait with the rest of the company following in March 2003. In total, 187 soldiers deployed with the 632nd Maintenance Company.
- The 632nd Maintenance Company dispatched four Maintenance Support Teams (MSTs); one which remained at Camp New York, Kuwait to provide maintenance and fuel support to the camp. The MSTs were responsible for manning two major Convoy Support Centers (CSCs), CSC Mack and CSC Freightliner, which provided Class I, III, and IX. These CSCs supported 3rd COSCOM, 3rd ID (M), and 101st Airborne Division as they moved forward into the fight with no logistical pauses. The MSTs also conducted 60 recovery missions, recovered 58 critical pieces of equipment, including an AVLB and an over-turned fuel tanker. Exemplifying the true meaning of customer support, the DS maintenance shops received over 540 jobs and completed 437 of them, most of which used Battle Damage Assessment Repair (BDAR) techniques. They also exhausted over 27,250 manhours.
- The Service and Recovery Section excelled in their tasks. The section modified two M923A2s to successfully add .50 caliber mounts for the 348th Transportation Company. These modifications provided the 348th with security needed on their many missions from Kuwait to Iraq. The S&R section

also created and mounted two M249 gun mounts for M998s. The section was also able to fabricate 30 field latrines, 20 showers, 100 traffic signs, 15 tables, 12 benches, moral welfare & recreation equipment such as a basketball hoop and horseshoes, 8 guard shacks, 8 grills for the 24th CSG organizational day, and over 10 guidon holders for units at Forward Logistics Base Dogwood. They also demilitarized over 10 captured enemy weapons. These items all enabled the further development of Dogwood and the morale of the soldiers.



- Throughout the operation, 632nd Maintenance Company supported over 83 customers with Class IX parts from an Authorized Stockage List (ASL) consisting of 2812 lines. The Supply Support Activity (SSA) processed over 33,000 requests and issued over 2100 lines of ASL.
- The Engineer Section proved to be a major asset during this operation. This section continually repaired an Iraqi water pump at the Euphrates River. Repairing this water pump provided water for all 3ID, 24th CSG, and other non-divisional units on and around Forward Logistics Base Dogwood. The Engineer Section also assisted in the repair of an Iraqi Gas Pump. This repair provided the local villages with more than 10,000 gallons of gas.



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